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AUTHOR Williamson-Ige, Dorothy
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ABSTRACT

The rhetoric of black writers and speakers asserts that (1) attitudes and practices toward black language are politically based to keep blacks subordinate to the dominant culture, and (2) African American scholars have a right to determine the meaning and implications of black language. Black rhetors contend that even those blacks who speak "standard English" are subject to discrimination, and that embarrassment and subjectivity are often given as excuses for discounting the opinions of black researchers regarding black English. They charge that incorrect conclusions have been drawn by language theorists who are familiar only with the surface culture of the black language, implying that African American scholars come closer to correctly interpreting the language and its meaning. These rhetorical arguments are appropriate in terms of rhetorical effort, in that a strong effort is made in stating their claims and in providing supporting data and examples. The rhetoric is biased, however, from a black perspective. While appropriate for black audiences in agreement, it is inappropriate when dealing with the audience in need of persuasion. At times this rhetoric appears to aim at both black and white audiences. Perhaps the answer is simply to clarify, reinforce ideas, and renew commitments. (HTH)

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RHETORICAL ANALYSIS AND CRITICISM OF BLACK RHETORS ON THE BLACK LANGUAGE CONTROVERSY--IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATION AND SOCIETY

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RHETORICAL ANALYSIS AND CRITICISM OF BLACK RHETORS ON THE BLACK LANGUAGE CONTROVERSY--IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATION AND SOCIETY

Dorothy Williamson-Ige, Ph.D

INTRODUCTION

A group of researchers, writers and scholars were summoned to a national conference held in St. Louis, Missouri dealing with the language development of black children in January, 1973. Black scholars attending the conference became so disgruntled with the research and conclusions that had been generated on the subject that they formed a black caucus to define the oral communication from an African American perspective. Out of this body, a new term was born, "Ebonics"--ebony meaning black and phonics meaning sound; thus black speech sounds.[1]

Since this time, a substantial amount of rhetoric concerning Ebonics has emerged. The rhetoric is filled with controversies on the problem of attitudes and practices regarding black language. It is interesting to discover what African American scholars have to say about the black language controversy. This is particularly true since many of them have complained, ironically, of being ignored on the subject.

Careful analysis of the rhetoric of black scholars reveals at least two prevailing themes or problem areas. Black writers and speakers assert that 1) attitudes and practices toward black language have been politically based to keep Blacks subordinate to the dominant culture and 2) African Americans have a right to determine the meaning and implications of black language. The purpose of this work is to assess the accuracy of the two contentions through rhetorical analysis and criticism.

METHOD

The problem areas identified have been formulated into two research questions. Is the rhetoric of black language accurate in its assertion that negative attitudes and practices toward black language are politically based, consciously or unconsciously, to favor the dominant American culture who has control? Is the rhetoric on black language accurate in its claim that African American scholars have the deep culture and expertise and, therefore, should define and determine directions regarding black language?

A stand will be taken by the writer or critic as to the rhetorical appropriateness of the idea-centered rhetoric. The spokespersons' messages will be evaluated in terms of

rhetorical efforts instead of effects. Effects are difficult to assess since the controversy remains unresolved. Appropriate rhetorical effort will be judged as described by Molefi Asante as neither a matter of color or theme but on what is in the best interest of the people involved in the rhetorical situation. Rhetors should be judged, Asante contends, on competence, clarity of perspective, and total understanding of the object from the appropriate philosophical worldview.[2]

In order to place the black language controversy into proper perspective, it is necessary to understand the various models or theories regarding black language.

BLACK LANGUAGE MODELS AND THEORIES

At least ten different models, some with sub-models, can be identified under two broad categories--theorists who do not recognize a separate black language and theorists who do recognize a distinct black form of communication. Black spokespersons or rhetors tend to take strong exception to the first two models--the Deficit Model and the Cultural Difference Model. They show the most support for theories referred to as the School and Society Models and Ebonics Theory.

Theories Denying a Separate Black Language

Deficit Model - The Deficit Model, also referred to as the Theory of Verbal Deficiency, considers black language as sloven, nonstandard, inferior, deviant speech which should be eradicated by speakers who which to progress in society. This school of thought does not recognize any continuity between African American language and West African language families. Proponents of the model perceive black language as the result of cultural deprivation. The theory considers standard English as the only acceptable language for Americans.[3]

A sub-model of the Deficit Theory can be called the Genetic Inferiority Model. This theory proposes that, in addition to environment and culture, black children are inferior in cognitive and linguistic skills due to genetic and anatomic differences in lips, larynx, and other speech organs.[4] Therefore, according to the theory, it is almost impossible for Blacks to speak standard English or respond on a high intellectual level.

Theories Recognizing a Separate Black Language

While many models recognize a separate black language, there are still wide points of difference expressed in these theories concerning black language. In addition to the widely

acclaimed Cultural Difference but Equal Theory, there are at least four specific theories which will be called School and Society Models, since they stress academic curriculum and societal concerns; and four Linguistic Models which stress the origin of black language.

Cultural Difference but Equal Model - In contrast to the Deficit Theory, a large body of rhetoric poured forth with the civil rights demands of the 1960s and the government grants of the 1970s. The rhetorical theme of this school of thought is that black language is logical and different, because of cultural differences; but not deficient. The model does not propose changing the child. According to Herbert Simons, writers of this enclave suggest teaching black children to read using black dialect readers, allowing the children to translate into black dialect while reading, or learning standard English as a second language.[5]

School and Society Models

School as Failure Model - The theory in which the school is unable to respond adequately to the needs of the child is known as the School as Failure Model.[6] Purposely using black

language for a black audience, Geneva Smitherman explains "Language. . . does not prevent Black children from getting educated. It is what teachers, principals, schools, standardized tests and speech tests do to, with and against the language of some Black children that is a barrier to their education.... Schools use it to label the child 'slow,' 'mentally retarded' or 'learning disabled'."[7] School as failure theorists call for teacher re-education and sensitivity sessions regarding language and culture. They also call for implementation of teaching techniques which actually teach the child standard English and academic subject matter instead of reject the student as a slow learner because of initial language difficulties.

General Systems Model - This theory cites institutionalized racism as a basic factor and holds little faith in remedial educational efforts unless the social system in which the child lives is changed.[8]

Discontinuity (Mismatch) Model - Robert Williams and L. Wendell Rivers imply discontinuity between school curriculum and black language. They propose matching class instructions, especially standardized tests, with the language background

of the child.[9] Robert Williams and Rivers suggest that such associative bridging or matching will "take the child from where he is to other goals."[10]

Bicultural Model - Advocates of Bicultural theory point to the unilateral notion of black students being required to learn black culture in addition to standard English and white middle-class culture while Caucasian children remain monocultural.[11] This negates the self-worth of the former to all in the society, according to the Bicultural Model. The theory is similar to the argument presented by those who vie for multicultural education; that all cultures should be represented in a pluralistic society rather than reflect the sole values of the dominant culture.[12]

Linguistic Models

Dialect Geographers - Theorists who attribute the origin of black language to the geographic location in which African American slaves resided instead of to a continuity with

West African languages are considered dialect geographers.[13] They argue that black language is closer to American nonstandard southern white speech and the deep structure of Elizabethan languages than to West African languages.

Creolist Theorists - In contrast to Dialect Geographers, Creolists theorize that black language originated from a pidgin or common trade language used by West Africans before being brought to America.[14] Therefore, according to Creolists, black language can be considered a language with West African rather than European roots. Creolists perceive black language as a creole which has become decreolized over time.

Transformational Theory - This theory synchronically employs the generative transformational model for descriptive analysis of black language. The theory indicates that superficial study of black language's similarity or difference to standard English or West African languages cannot be as conclusive as thoroughly analyzing the deep structure of the language. While the results of this theory appear inconclusive to date, transformational theorists have been criticized by Ernie Smith, a major developer of Ebonics Theory, for proposing

that contemporary black language varieties are "merely nonstandard social dialects of English."[15]

Ebonics Theory - The most contemporary and pronounced model among black scholars is Ebonics Theory. Instead of considering black speech as originating from a creole or a pidgin, the theory traces black language to the West African Hamito-Bantu language families and criticizes other theories for implying discontinuity in the language and culture of African Americans and West Africans.[16] Robert Williams and Rivers describe concepts of the theory:

> Ebonics is defined as the linguistic and paralinguistic features which on a concentric continuum represent the communicative competence of West African, Caribbean, and United States slave descendants of African origin. Ebonics includes the various idioms, patois, argots, ideolects, and social dialects of these people. It is thus the culturally appropriate language of Black people and is not to be considered deviant. An example of Ebonics is: "The Hawk definitely ain't jivin' outdoors today," which means "the air is crisp" or "the wind of winter is piercing." Contrary to popular belief this sentence is neither slang-expression, or a nonstandard English form.[17]

In regard to the language's origin, Smith indicates that linguists of other schools of thought are ". . . actually ignoring the question of linguistic genesis: for if the notion of the deep and surface structure in language is valid, . . .the mere intrusion of European lexicons would not alter the basic structure of African languages."[18] Similarly,

Lorenzo Turner has identified at least four thousand expressions used by Blacks in the southern United States that are traceable to African languages.[19] Asante has referred to words derived from African origin such as "agogo," "biddy," "goober," "o.k.," and "okra."[20] He implies that while the surface structure of the language influenced and was influenced by the American South, some African Americans yet retain such Africanisms and many of those Blacks who do not retain the specific African vocabulary items retain the tone, gestures, rhythms, and styling of "he sure can rap." Asante asserts that this "epic memory" affirms the continuity of African deep culture in African Americans.[21]

In addition to criticizing other black language theories for implying discontinuity of African culture, Ebonics theorists also criticize Cultural Difference advocates for suggesting black dialect readers and English as a second language for black students in schools. Similar to the School as Failure and General Systems Models, Ebonics philosophy places emphasis on changing school and society attitudes as well as appropriate teacher training. Ebonics theorists indicate that black students have often been cast aside in the past as

intellectual misfits because of teacher inabilities to educate black children. Rather than having students study standard English as a second language or use readers exhibiting nonstandard English and incorrect grammar (which is not considered black language) Ebonics advocates propose having school personnel accept black students and their language and move from where they are toward seriously attempting to teach black pupils.

Having covered some of the major theories surrounding black language, it is easy to understand the controversial nature of the rhetoric. Let us move to analyze some of the arguments on the subject.

RHETORICAL ANALYSIS

In order to determine whether or not the rhetoric of black spokespersons is valid, it is necessary to identify major issues regarding the claims that negative attitudes and practices toward black language are politically based and that African Americans have the right to define black language and policies toward it.

The Question of Black Language and Politics

The first research question is highly controversial. The charge that negative attitudes and actions toward black language are politically based is challenged by both the

Deficit Model and the Cultural Difference Model. Both theories indicate that attitudes and actions regarding black language have developed as such because of cultural disadvantages. However, black scholars assert that the reasons are more political. Ronald Williams, a black rhetor, argues "The Black scholar, then, cannot afford. . . seeing his research or scholarship divorced from politics and economics. . . . To use dialectal readers in a country that is already divided by race and poverty is to institutionalize a low-prestige dialect in the schools."[22] Approaching rhetorical conflicts from a political point of view is not unusual. Leland Griffin has stated ". . . that politics above all is drama; and that drama requires a conflict. . . less historical or sociological than political."[23]

Reinforcing the political argument, several black rhetors make reference to inappropriate labels used in describing black language due to biases exhibited by the dominant culture. Robert Williams and Mary Brantley refer to a misnomer; "In most instances, nonstandard English and Black English have been inappropriately used interchangeably. . . . nonstandard English is neither Black English nor uniquely used by Blacks."[24] Ann Covington takes exception to another label ". . . the statement that the Black child is culturally or socially disadvantaged seems to be a catch-all,

summing up in one phrase everything that is wrong with him. . . . The only item not included in the term 'culturally disadvantaged' is genetic inferiority."[25]

Smith goes further to indicate that even the term "black English" shows a racial bias because of its inconsistency with other terms. He states that "No one refers to English spoken by Indians as 'red English' or that of Chinese as 'yellow English;' or not even that of whites as 'white English'--but standard English."[26] Summing up the political implicatinns of black language and labeling from a comparative perspective, Smitherman opines "It is axiomatic that if Black people were in power in this country, Black English would be the prestige idiom."[27]

In addition to taking exception to labels used in describing black oral communication, the rhetors also refer to the double standard in black and white American culture. They view attitudes and practices as a matter of who has the bulk of political power as much as a matter of language. Reminiscing about her childhood, Covington explains ". . . as children we knew that certain jobs were open only to white children. It made no difference what variety of English we spoke (just as it did not make a difference in Nazi Germany that many Jews spoke flawless German without accent when the pogroms started)."[28] Reiterating political

overtones, Smitherman generalizes, "As long as we have two separate societies in contact and conflict, we're going to have two separate languages."[29]

Robert Williams' rhetoric makes the point that administering tests which have been standardized on white middle-class children is monocultural and politically ignores a significant racial minority. Through administering an African American cultural specific BITCH (Black Intelligence Test for Cultural Homogeneity) test, his results showed that Blacks scored significantly higher than whites on the test because African Americans were more knowledgeable on black culture.[30] Robert Williams' findings implied that the same phenomenon works in reverse when standardized tests, which have been norm-based on the politically dominant culture, are administered to many black students. The inference is that the tests are not representative of a pluralistic society and that those who are not members of the dominant culture are penalized for their lack of political control.

Robert Williams defends his findings as well as the rhetoric of other black scholars on the question of attitudes and actions being politically based:

> One criticism this type of work will probably receive is that there lurks beneath it a separatist ideology or a "reverse racism" motif. But nothing could be farther from the truth. This work can be

> more appropriately defined as "humanistic" in that it attempts to assess the reactions of human beings to situations perpetrated upon them by other human beings. It is furthermore an attempt to assess the tremendous powers of adaptation of which human beings are capable.[31]

The Question of Black Scholars Determining Directions Regarding Black Language

The argument that African Americans have the right to define their language and its implications has also been challenged by earlier statements of the other schools of thought and through exclusion of black scholars in the decision-making process. African American scholars complain of being accused of becoming too embarrassed and emotionally subjective to be experts on black language. On this point, Grace Holt explains:

> Participants in the development of the field of Black English are scholarly agents of social change who evidently believed it unnecessary to include Black scholars in the process. Generally, Blacks have been peripherally involved as informers, data gatherers, and entrées into areas where White penetration would be difficult. With limited exceptions, White intellectuals excluded Black intellectuals in the development of Black English as a blueprint for social engineering. . . . Given the fact of culture differences, it necessarily follows that culturally different inquiries may produce culturally different results.[32]

According to black rhetorical scholars, embarrassment and subjectivity are often given as excuses for discounting the opinions of black researchers.[33] This may cause one to question the expertise of the rhetors. Upon checking the credentials, it was discovered that most of the spokespersons who identified themselves as being black hold terminal graduate degrees and teach in established American institutions of higher education in fields such as Linguistics, Speech Communication, English, Reading, Afro-American Studies, and Psychology.[34] The scholars tend to corroborate each other through articles published in established professional journals; thus supporting their professional credibility and expertise.[35]

In a similar vein, the notion of bias on the part of black researchers is also brought into question. Robert Jeffrey and Owen Peterson define any source as being biased ". . . when it has a vested interest in the outcome of an issue. . . it cannot be trusted to observe impartially. . . . groups with special interests are likely to be biased."[36] According to this definition, the rhetoricians under study are biased. They make it clear that they have a vested interest in removing ethnocentric attitudes and wish to reverse the trend in society toward a more humanistic viewpoint. Robert Williams indicates the purpose of the rhetoric as meant to

influence when he states "Our aim here is to play up the controversy. . . and to produce, at the same time, some order out of the chaos surrounding the problem."[37] Not only does the rhetoric of black spokespersons admit being unashamedly biased, but points a finger at other theorists for being biased without admitting or even recognizing their own cultural preferences when making negative interpretations about black language.

African American rhetors argue that black language must be studied and conclusions drawn from the worldview of which the language originates. Asante postulates that "If rhetorical theory emerges out of given philosophical worldview and we can discuss the uniqueness of black discourse and suggest. . . theoretical directions, then surely a criticism must emerge capable of handling the peculiarities of the theory. Otherwise we have asked the apple to compare to the mango's sweetness and softness."[38] Covington articulates a similar idea through offering a specific instance of interpreting nonverbal behavior from a black perspective. Whereas members of the dominant culture may interpret black children playing with tin cans and cardboard boxes as being culturally deprived, members of black culture may view such activities as requiring greater challenge and ingenuity than required with expensive toys.[39]

The reaction of black parents has also been assessed on the issue of black scholars interpreting the black language controversy. Covington noted that black parents were shocked at how the language of African Americans had been described by educated persons as being nonverbal, culturally disadvantaged, and socially deprived.[40] Orlando Taylor's research showed that 52% of black parents tested recognized that there are times and places when and where black language is more appropriate than standard English. At the same time, in contrast to dialect reader advocates of the Cultural Difference school, 80% of these black parents indicated a belief that the teaching of standard English is important in the schools.[41] Taylor's research is significant in supporting the assertion by black theorists that while African Americans feel positive toward their language, they are adamant that black children learn standard English and that uninformed negative attitudes of educators are changed which penalize black students.

Black rhetors make the charge that incorrect conclusions have been drawn by theorists who are only familiar with the surface culture of black language. The rhetors imply that African American scholars, who understand the deep culture and structure of black language, come closer to correctly interpreting the language and its meaning.

Thus the rhetoric of black scholars identify political bias of the dominant culture and exclusion of black scholars from major decisions regarding the language as primary causes of negative attitudes and practices involved in the rhetorical controversy.

RHETORICAL CRITICISM

Attention has been given to the sources and messages from an examination of the arguments rather than from a judgmental point of view. In order to complete the criticism, however, the writer's or critic's evaluation of the sources and messages is necessary.[42] As indicated, since effects are yet materializing, efforts made in the rhetoric will be assessed.

Is the rhetoric appropriate in terms of rhetorical effort? The critic's answer is a "qualified yes." The rhetoric makes a strong effort in stating its claims. Data and examples give meaning to the arguments advanced. The arguments are strongly supported. Whether or not they are correct, the spokespersons are not rhetorical cowards. They take a stand which indicts the majority society. Since most of the scholars are involved with academia,

stating such claims then working shoulder to shoulder with peers whom the challenges are leveled against takes courage. The rhetors are active agents who are attempting to reconstruct their environment regarding how black language is interpreted. Fresh arguments emerged that had not been addressed before by so many at one time.

Why is the affirmative answer "qualified?" Several explanations can be offered. The rhetoric is biased, from a black perspective, to the point that those of other schools of thought may find it difficult to digest. At times, the rhetoric seems to ignore general persuasive theory if it is trying to reach the majority audience of whom many of the charges are leveled against. An outright attack is usually inappropriate when dealing with an audience that may be hostile toward controversial ideas.[43] On the other hand, if the rhetoric is meant for mostly black scholars and audiences who are already in agreement, the tactic is much more appropriate for this supportive audience. It is sometimes difficult to tell which audience the rhetoric is geared toward. At times it appears to aim at both black and white culture. If the rhetoric is aimed at black scholars already in agreement, why expend energy trying to persuade the already committed? Perhaps the answer is simply to clarify, reinforce ideas, and renew commitments.

In critiquing the rhetoric, the question of appropriate timing surfaced for the critic. If other researchers were making so many theoretical blunders, why did black scholars wait so long to speak up? African American scholars were around a decade earlier. Are they not partly responsible for the conclusions drawn about the language through their silence? If they had been ignored earlier, why did they not organize before 1973 and make themselves heard? One possible solution came from the critic's search for an answer. Rhetoric is attuned to the times. Situational factors can constrain rhetorical choices.[44] Perhaps the scholars were too busy during the 1960s with the larger civil rights movement. Since that time, causes have been fought with politics and the pen rather than in the streets.

In essence, the rhetoric under study was more appropriate for a more supportive African American than a Caucasian American audience in terms of persuasive effort. The timing of the messages was largely dictated by the rhetorical situation.

While the Source-Message-Critic posture for rhetorical criticism indicates that the evaluator should become actively involved in the criticism, the critic has made a conscious attempt to do so and yet assess the rhetoric objectively.[45] Several specific inferences have been drawn from analyzing

the rhetoric. They take a stand on the accuracy of the two major research questions or assertions made by black spokespersons:

1. The rhetoric of African American scholars appears justified in its claim that ethnocentric attitudes and practices toward black language are politically based, consciously or unconsciously, because of dominant culture biases and interpretations.

2. Black rhetors are admittedly biased, from an African American perspective, in making the above assertion; yet no more so than earlier theorists who defined the language from the perspective of the dominant culture.

3. As the rhetors have charged, earlier politically based attitudes, particularly of the Cultural Difference Model, were sometimes well-meaning but inappropriate.[46]

4. Black scholars make a legitimate claim that their deep rather than surface culture, in addition to their professional expertise, "legitimizes" their right to play a key role in defining and determining directions in regard to black language. As Maulana Karenga has stated, "No people can turn its history and humanity over to alien hands and expect social justice and respect."[47]

CONCLUSION

Hopefully this study sheds further light on a subject which has been treated under different illumination. The rhetoric itself makes important implications for education and society which are subject enough alone for treatment in a separate work. Even if one cannot agree with conclusions drawn from this rhetorical study, perhaps he or she will be motivated to ask different research questions or employ different methodologies.

Just as doctors have a sworn oath to healing, so do social scientists and scholars have an obligation to investigate areas where misunderstandings in language and communication occur. The sooner we understand the root of certain communication problems, the sooner we can move toward remedying them. That is our job.

[1] Robert L. Williams, ed., Ebonics: The True Language of Black Folks (St. Louis: The Institute of Black Studies, 1975) p. III.

[2] Molefi K. Asante, Afrocentricity: The Theory of Social Change (New York: Amulefi Publishing Company, 1980) pp. 26 and 68.

[3] Walter M. Brasch, Black English and the Mass Media (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1981), pp. xxii-xxiv and Robert Williams, Ebonics, pp. 97-98.

[4] Brasch, Black English, pp. xxiv-xxv and Robert Williams and L. Wendell Rivers, "The Effects of Language on the Test Performance of Black Children," Ebonics, p. 97.

[5] Herbert D. Simons, "Black Dialect and Learning to Read," Literacy for Diverse Learners Promoting Growth at All Levels, ed. Jerry Johns (Delaware: IRA, 1974), pp. 4-7.

[6] Robert Williams and Rivers, "The Effects of Language," p. 101.

[7] Geneva Smitherman, "Black English: So Good It's 'Bad'," Essence (September, 1981), p. 154.

[8] Robert Williams and Rivers, "The Effects of Language," p. 102.

[9] Ibid., pp. 102-107.

[10] Ibid., p. 106.

[11] Ibid., pp. 101-102.

[12] Ricardo L. Garcia, Fostering a Pluralistic Society Through Multi-Ethnic Education (Bloomington, Indiana: The Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation, 1978), pp. 1-26.

[13] Walter M. Brasch, Black English and the Mass Media (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1981), pp. xxv-xxvi.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Brasch, Black English, p. xxviii and 302. Also Ernie A. Smith, "The Historical Development of Ebonics," Seminar Paper Series, no. 38 (Department of Linguistics, California State University, Fullerton, 1977), p. 6.

[16] Brasch, Black English, pp.xxvii-xxviii and Robert Williams, Ebonics, pp. 1-141.

[17] Robert L. Williams and L. Wendell Rivers, "The Effects of Language on the Test Performance of Black Children," Ebonics: The True Language of Black Folks (St. Louis: The Institute of Black Studies, 1975) pp. 100-101.

[18] Brasch, Black English, pp. xxviii and 302. Also Smith, "The Historical Development," p. 6.

[19] Molefi K. Asante, Afrocentricity: The Theory of Social Change (New York: Amulefi Publishing Company, 1980) p. 74.

[20] Ibid., p. 75.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Ronald Williams, "The Struggle to Know, the Struggle to Survive," Ebonics: The True Language of Black Folks (St. Louis: The Institute of Black Studies, 1975) ed., Robert Williams, pp. 55-58.

[23] Leland M. Griffin, "On Studying Movements," Central States Speech Journal, Vo. 31, No. 4 (Winter, 1980), p. 229.

[24] Robert L. Williams and Mary Brantley "Disentangling the Confusion Surrounding Slang, Nonstandard English, Black English and Ebonics: Conclusion," Ebonics, p. 134.

[25] Ann J. Covington, "Teachers' Attitudes Toward Black English: Effects On Student Achievement," Ebonics, p. 40.

[26] Ernie A. Smith, Ebonics Conference, St. Louis Community College at Florissant Valley, St. Louis, Missouri, March 19, 1977.

[27] Geneva Smitherman, "English Teacher, Why You Be Doing the Thangs You Don't Do?" English Journal, 61 (January, 1972), p. 63.

[28] Covington, "Black People and Black English: Attitudes and Deeducation in a Biased Macroculture," Black English: a Seminar, eds., Deborah Sears Harrison and Tom Trabasso (Hillsdale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers, 1976), p. 256.

[29] Smitherman, "Black English: So Good It's 'Bad'," Essence (September, 1981), p. 154.

[30] Robert L. Williams, ed., Ebonics: The True Language of Black Folks (St. Louis: The Institute of Black Studies, 1975), pp. 123-130.

[31] Ibid., p. 140

[32] Grace Holt, "Black English: Surviving the Bastardization Process," Ebonics, pp. 64-67.

[33] Juanita V. Williamson, "A Look at Black English," Ebonics, p. 13.

[34] Robert Williams, Ebonics, pp. 142-144

[35] J. Sledd, "On Not Teaching English Usage," English Journal (1965), pp. 698-703. Also Geneva Smitherman, "English Teacher, Why You Be Doing the Thangs You Don't Do?" English Journal, 61 (January, 1972), pp. 59-63. Also Robert Williams, Ebonics, pp. 142-144.

[36] Robert Jeffrey and Owen Peterson, Speech (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1975), pp. 283-284.

[37] Robert Williams, Ebonics, p. 3.

[38] Molefi K. Asante, "Afrocentricity as Method in Discourse Criticism," Unpublished paper, Speech Communication Association Convention, San Antonio, Texas, 1979, pp. 1-2.

[39] Ann J. Covington, "Teachers' Attitudes Toward Black English: Effects on Student Achievement," Ebonics, p. 41.

[40] Ann J. Covington, "Black People and Black English: Attitudes and Deeducation in a Biased Macroculture," Black English: a Seminar, eds., Deborah Sears Harrison and Tom Trabasso (Hillsdale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers, 1976), p. 261.

[41] Orlando L. Taylor, "Black Language and What to Do About It:' Some Black Community Perspectives," Ebonics: The True Language of Black Folks (St. Louis: The Institute of Black Studies, 1975) ed., Robert Williams, pp. 28-39.

[42] Lawrence W. Rosenfield, "The Anatomy of Critical Discourse," Speech Monographs, (March, 1968), pp. 142-151.

[43] Kenneth E. Andersen, Persuasion Theory and Practice (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1978), pp. 157-158 and 180-181.

[44] Herbert D. Simons, "On Terms, Definitions and Theoretical Distinctiveness Comments On Papers by McGee and Zarefsky," Central States Speech Journal, Vol. 31, No. 4 (Winter, 1980), p. 307.

[45] Rosenfield, "The Anatomy of Critical Discourse," pp. 142-151.

[46] Ronald Williams, "The Struggle to Know, the Struggle to Survive," Ebonics, pp. 55-63.

[47] Maulana Karenga, "Afro-American Values," Speech, Buffalo, Center of Positive Thought, 1979.